

REMARKS

The claims now pending in the application are Claims 1, 4 to 7, 10 to 13, 16 to 22, 24 to 28 and 30 to 38, the independent claims being Claims 1, 7, 13, 19, 20, 26, 32 and 38. Claims 2, 3, 8, 9, 14, 15, 23, 29 and 35 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 4 to 7, 10 to 13, 16 to 20, 24 to 26, 32 and 38 have been amended.

In the Official Action dated May 22, 2003, Claims 1, 2, 4 to 8, 10 to 14 and 16 to 38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as unpatentable over JP 10-240103 (Noda) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,016,416 (Kitamura). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection respectfully are requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

The rejection of the claims over the cited art respectfully are traversed. Nevertheless, without conceding the propriety of the rejections, Claims 2, 8, 14, 23, 29 and 35 have been cancelled, and Claims 1, 4 to 7, 10 to 13, 16 to 20, 24 to 26, 32 and 38 have been amended herein more clearly to recite various novel features of the present invention, with particular attention to the Examiner's comments. In particular, each of the independent claims has been amended to include the features of a coupling portion and an electrophotographic photosensitive drum having a drum cylinder, where the coupling portion is fitted and fixed to one end of the drum cylinder, and wherein the coupling portion, a 'second' gear portion (disposed between a 'gear portion' and the coupling portion in an axial direction of the electrophotographic photosensitive drum), the 'gear portion', a shaft and a 'twisted protrusion' are formed integrally. Support for the proposed amendments may be found in the original application. No new matter has been added.

Applicants submit that the prior art fails to anticipate the present invention. Moreover, Applicants submit that there are differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art, such that the subject matter taken as a whole would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.

The Noda JP '103 reference relates to an image forming apparatus and cartridge, and discloses a system including a photographic photosensitive drum having a spur gear and a drum gear. However, Applicants submit that the Noda JP '103 reference fails to disclose or suggest at least the above-discussed features of the present invention. In fact, as acknowledged by the Examiner in the Official Action (page 4, lines 6 to 9), the Noda JP '103 reference fails to disclose or suggest at least the feature of a driving-force transmitting part having a 'second' gear portion, as disclosed and claimed in the present application. Applicants submit that the Noda JP '103 reference thus further can not disclose or suggest the feature where a coupling portion is fitted and fixed to one end of the drum cylinder, and wherein the coupling portion, the 'second' gear portion (disposed between a 'gear portion' and the coupling portion in an axial direction of the electrophotographic photosensitive drum), the 'gear portion', a shaft and a 'twisted protrusion' are formed integrally, as disclosed and claimed in the present application.

The Kitamura '416 patent relates to an image recording apparatus having a drum and a roller with intermeshing gears, and discloses an image forming system have a plurality of gears 15, 16 and 32 that are directly attached to the end of a drum (cylinder). However, Applicants submit that the Kitamura '416 patent fails to disclose or suggest at least the above-discussed features of the present invention. Nowhere is the Kitamura '416 patent understood to disclose or suggest at least the feature of a driving-force transmitting part, as disclosed and claimed in the present application. Accordingly, nowhere is the Kitamura '416 patent understood to disclose or suggest the feature of a coupling portion, as disclosed and claimed in the present application. Nor is the Kitamura '416 patent understood to remedy the deficiencies of the Noda JP '103 reference or add anything to the Noda JP '103 reference that would make obvious the claimed invention..

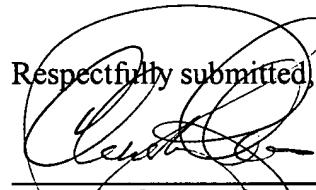
For the above reasons, Applicants submit that independent Claims 1, 7, 13, 19, 20, 26, 32 and 38 are allowable over the cited art.

Claims 4 to 6, 10 to 12, 16 to 18, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 30, 31, 33, 34, 36 and 37 depend from Claims 1, 7, 13, 20, 26, 32 and 38, respectively, and are believed allowable for the same reasons. Moreover, each of these dependent claims recites additional features in combination with the features of its respective base claim, and is believed allowable in its own right. Individual consideration of the dependent claims respectfully is requested.

Applicants believe that the present Amendment is responsive to each of the points raised by the Examiner in the Official Action, and submit that the application is in allowable form. Favorable consideration of the claims and passage to issue of the present application at the Examiner's earliest convenience earnestly are solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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